THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) to (d) Under the Growth Centre Scheme, one growth centre was sanctioned for the State of Manipur in 1998. The contribution of Central Government under the scheme is limited to Rs. 15 crore by way of equity. The remaining funds are to be raised by the State Government and its agencies. So far, Rs.1.5 crore has been released by the Central Government and an expenditure of Rs. .085 crore has been incurred. Acquisition of land by the State Government for setting up of Growth Centre is under progress and it is not possible to fix a time schedule for completion of the centre.

Registration process for intermediates and bulk drug

2722. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government have done away with the registration process for intermediates and bulk drug imports meant for exports;

(b) if so, whether this would give a big relief to the domestic pharma industry as it would not only make the import process easier, but would also make the exports economical;

(c) whether this has been welcomed by the exporters; and

(d) if so, to what extent it would be helpful?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYASAGAR RAO): (a) Yes, Sir. The Government has exempted import of drugs under the Advance Licensing Scheme (meant for export production) from the registration process prescribed under the Drugs and Cosmetics Act.

(b) to (d) This exemption will give a fillip to exports by providing easy access to imported inputs meant for export production. Exemption from the registration process will also lead to reduction in transaction costs of the exporters. As such, it has been welcomed at all levels of the exporting community.

Merchandise exports to US

2723. SHRIMATI SHABANA AZMI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state :